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*Air Force Association
American Ex-Prisoners
of War
American Legion
AMVETS
Association of the United
States Army
Disabled American
Veterans
Fleet Reserve Association
Korean War Veterans
Association
Legion of Valor of the
U.S., Inc.
Marine Corps League
Military Order of the
Purple Heart
Military Officers Association
of America
Military Order of the
World Wars
National Association for
Uniformed Services
Navy Seabee Veterans of
America
Non-Commissioned
Officers Association
Paralyzed Veterans of
America
Reserve Officers Association
Roanoke Valley Veterans
Council
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Vietnam Veterans of America
Virginia Army/Air National
Guard Enlisted
Association
Virginia National Guard
Association
Women Marines Association*

Adopted
July 17, 2013

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Position Paper 2014-04

Electronic Return of Absentee Ballots by Overseas Uniformed Military Voters

1. **Objective:** To allow for electronic return of absentee ballots by Overseas Uniformed Military voters.
2. **Background:**
 - a. Overseas uniformed service personnel and their dependents often experience difficulties in casting absentee ballots due to a number of factors, including the timely return of a voted ballot.
 - b. Currently an overseas voter can electronically register and receive an absentee ballot per the Uniformed & Overseas Absentee Voter Act (UOCAVA). By Virginia Code the ballot must be returned via "snail" mail.

Election	Total Votes*	Total Absentee*	UOCAVA**
2008 – Nov. Gen.	3,752,858	506,672	14,107 (0.4% of Total Vote)
2010 – Nov. Gen.	2,214,503	106,888	1,785 (0.08% of Total Vote)
2012 – Nov. Gen.	3,896,846	447,907	Not yet available

* Per Virginia State Board of Elections – Election Results

** Ballots Submitted by Domestic & Overseas Uniformed Military (Election Assistance Commission report)

- c. SB830 as passed by the Senate in the 2013 General Assembly would allow the State Board of Elections (SBE) to provide instructions and procedures to enable uniformed-service voters outside the United States to return voted military overseas ballots securely by electronic format. As defined in subsections 9 and 10 of §24.2-452a "Uniformed-service voter" means an individual who is qualified to vote and is:
 - A member of the active or reserve components of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard of the United States who is on active duty;
 - A member of the Merchant Marine, the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service, or the commissioned corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States;
 - A member on activated status of the National Guard; or
 - A spouse or dependent of a member referred to in this definition.
 - d. "United States," used in the territorial sense, means the several states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and any territory or insular possession subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.
 - e. The Impact Statement for SB830 states that there is no material fiscal impact on SBE. However, localities may experience increased costs
3. **Discussion:**
 - a. SBE has expressed confidence in developing procedures that address privacy and security concerns related to the electronic transmission, management, and counting absentee ballots from uniformed military personnel serving overseas.
 - b. Legislation is required to permit electronic return of the voted ballot from uniformed military personnel serving overseas.
 4. **Recommendation:** That the Governor and General Assembly enact legislation to permit the electronic return of absentee ballot by overseas uniformed military voters.